

2007 Virginia Tourism Summit

A Program of the Virginia Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus

Who should attend this conference?

It's not just for CVBs anymore. There are three very good tracks planned with excellent speakers and panelists for your Internet, sales, and marketing staff. VACVB invites attractions, accommodations, retailers, and all of our tourism industry partners to join the CVBs for this conference.

For the first time a field study is being offered as an optional program. The field study is a hands-on examination of how the Bedford Welcome Center was developed. The benefits of this field study are not limited to communities considering a new welcome center;

the lessons learned are transferable to conference or performing arts centers, community museums, and other projects that are tourism related.

The VACVB began sponsoring this conference in order to provide professional development for our members. It allows individuals unable to attend national tourism conferences to benefit from hearing national speakers.



Virginia is for Lovers™

Front Cover: Smith Mountain Lake - RoneyPhotography.com

Register today in 4 quick steps!

- 1 Select registration categories and total fees on the enclosed registration form.
- 2 Provide name(s) and contact information.
- 3 Make check(s) payable to VACVB.
- 4 Mail form with check(s) by April 16 to:
VACVB, c/o LCVA, Kathryn Bird
222 Catocin Circle SE, Suite 100
Leesburg, Virginia 20175

Questions

Have questions about the registration or program? Call 703-771-2170 ext. 15 or visit www.VACVB.com.



Bedford County

Come experience a valley nestled among Virginia's beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. A land where majestic mountain peaks stoop to drink from the reflective waters of a vast highland lake and circling hawks patrol ancient forests as they've done since the beginning of time.

This is Bedford. Ruggedly beautiful. Enticingly exciting. And teeming with history.

It's a land of intense patriotism where the National D-Day Memorial stands silent watch on a high hill overlooking the mountain valley that gave more of its sons on the beach at Normandy than any other place in the country.

It's a haven of solitude where Thomas Jefferson chose to build the private retreat he used to find inspiration for the ideas and writings that shaped the experiment in democracy know as America.

And it's a place that offers unlimited appeal to visitors of all ages and interests. From arts, antiquing, and family attractions, to mountain biking, backpacking, and dinner cruises on a mountain lake, Bedford truly has something for everyone.

Bedford Welcome Center • 540-587-5683 • www.VisitBedford.com



Leading Destination Marketing

Mariners Landing Resort Community & Conference Center
Smith Mountain Lake
April 23 - 25, 2007



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Preliminary Program & Exhibit Schedule

Monday, April 23rd

- 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM **Registration at Mariners Landing**
Refreshments sponsored by Good Housekeeping
- 1:00 – 6:00 PM **Exhibitor Set-up**
- 12:30 – 1:00 PM **Field Study Registration at Bedford Welcome Center**
Refreshments sponsored by the Bedford Welcome Center
- 1:00 – 4:00 PM **Field Study: Bedford Welcome Center and The National D-Day Memorial**
This is a local success story of how a community worked together to provide visitor services including camping and WiFi at their welcome center, provide needed community space, give a home to a treasured fire engine and capitalize on the visitation from a national memorial. This story is worth hearing and understanding how vision, community support and the value of tourism brought government, community and businesses together for a common goal. The afternoon will include a presentation about the project from start to finish, a tour of the Welcome Center and a tour of The National D-Day Memorial.
There is a separate fee of \$35 per registration for this field study.
- 4:00 PM **Tree Planting in Memory of Nanci Drake at the Bedford Welcome Center**
- 6:30 – 8:00 PM **Welcome Reception and Dinner**
Reception sponsored by The Washington Post Media, Dinner sponsored by Bedford County and Bedford City at Mariners Landing Resort Community Conference Center

Susan Sweeney

Susan Sweeney, CA, CSP is a renowned E-Business and Internet marketing expert. In December of 2006, she was inducted into the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers Hall of Fame and is the author of six books about Internet marketing, website promotion and E-Business strategy. Her Internet marketing books are *101 Ways to Promote Your Web Site*, *Internet Marketing for Your Tourism Business* and *The e-Business Formula for Success*.

Susan is the founder and President of Connex Network Inc., a thriving Internet marketing and E-Business consulting firm and she holds both her Chartered Accountant and Certified General Accountant designations. Her enthusiastic personality combined with her vast hands-on international marketing experience keeps her listeners captivated and informs them about the latest Internet developments and strategies.

Robin Washington

Robin Washington began her career with the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution's* travel advertising team 15 years ago. As travel advertising manager, she leads a team that sells, markets and consults to all aspects of the travel industry. Robin is also a certified corporate trainer focusing on sales, sales management, organization/time management and effective communication.

Bill Geist

Bill Geist heads up his own consulting firm, Zeitgeist, which specializes in strategic planning, governance, marketing and legislative issues for destination marketing organizations, tourism-focused chambers of commerce and economic development organizations. He has served as president of the Greater Madison Convention and Visitors Bureau and president of the Wisconsin Association of Convention and Visitors Bureau. Bill is also the author of *Destination Leadership for Boards* and hosts a teleseminar designed for destination marketing and management professionals.

Tuesday, April 24th

- 7:30 AM – 5:00 PM **Registration at Mariners Landing**
- 7:30 – 8:30 AM **Exhibits Open and Breakfast Buffet**
Breakfast sponsored by eBrains
- 8:30 AM **General Session**
The Past, Present and Future of Internet Marketing
Is your website keeping current with consumers' expectations? Susan Sweeney, Internet marketing expert, will review the life cycle of tourism websites - the past, present and future. This session is a must for all tourism industry professionals who want to know how their site measures up, what they have to do to catch up and what they have to prepare for in the future.
Keynote Speaker: Susan Sweeney
- 9:30 – 10:15 AM **Exhibits Open and Refreshment Break**
- 10:15 – 11:15 AM **Concurrent Sessions**
- Search Engine Secrets**
85% of Internet users doing their travel research online use search engines. Most rarely go beyond the first 10-20 results listed. To benefit from this tremendous traffic opportunity you have to make sure your site is designed to be search engine friendly, as each has its own unique ranking criteria. Susan Sweeney, Internet marketing expert, will discuss the popular search engines and their ranking criteria and will provide you with tips, tools, techniques and resources to optimize your search engine placement.
Speaker: Susan Sweeney
- Getting your Sales Process in Shape**
Feeling like you need to reinvigorate your sales routine? Everyone is in sales and this fast paced, interactive and fun session will provide you with an opportunity to take your selling skills to another level. We will work to develop a strong appreciation of a well-defined sales process and leverage that to close more sales and develop very strong consultative relationships with your clients. No more being a sales couch potato after this session!
Speaker: Robin Washington
- Advertising Agencies**
Explore the pros and cons of having an "agency of record" to cover your advertising needs. This will be a great introduction and discussion of best practices and may serve as a prelude for two afternoon concurrent sessions – one for those who think they want an ad agency, and another for those who might want to do it themselves or outsource on a project basis.
Panelists: Randall Foskey, Foskey/Phillips Marketing & Advertising; Art Webb, BCF Advertising; Karen Nasuti, Nasuti + Hinkle Creative Thinking; Jeremy Harvey, Loudoun Convention & Visitors Association; Esther Turner, Prince William Manassas Convention and Visitors Bureau
- 11:15 – 11:30 AM **Exhibits Open and Refreshment Break**
- 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM **Concurrent Session**
- 3 Generations of Internet Marketing**
Based upon her new book, this session will highlight issues for businesses that are either planning to launch a new e-business or increase the profits of an existing one. This session provides techniques and methods to increase effectiveness and growth. Approaches to viewing a company's foundation introspectively through products, services, branding, target markets, online objectives and budget are discussed, as is how to objectively evaluate the effectiveness of a website. Proven online marketing techniques such as link strategy, mail lists, content site advertising, newsgroup marketing, viral marketing, RSS, blogvertising, behavioral advertising and emerging techniques are outlined. Guidance in the areas of creating the right interface, design and brand integrity, online copy and quality content, persuasive navigation and functionality is also given and methods for campaign testing, measuring metrics and analysis are covered.
Speaker: Susan Sweeney

How to Find an Advertising Agency

You've decided you want an agency of record, how do you develop a request for proposal or request for qualifications to get the process started? Learn about finding, interviewing and evaluating advertising agencies from a panel of professionals. *Panelists: Randall Foskey, Foskey/Phillips Marketing & Advertising; Art Webb, BCF Advertising; Karen Nasuti, Nasuti + Hinkle Creative Thinking; Mark Shore, Charlottesville/ Albamarle County Convention and Visitors Bureau*

Thriving (Not Just Surviving) Without an Advertising Agency

It can require more project management savvy from the bureau staff but some of you may decide not to hire an advertising agency. Hear recommendations about making sure that you are still well represented and how to communicate directly using the right language with advertising representatives. *Panelists: Jeremy Harvey, Loudoun Convention & Visitors Association; Esther Turner, Prince William Manassas Convention and Visitors Bureau; and Lori Sorrentino, Culpeper Tourism*

Flexing and Showing Off the Right Sales Muscles

What do your clients really want – fluffy beds, coffee pots in the room, a small town, a lake house, continental breakfast, large meeting space, late check-out and all the other great "stuff" your destination or property has to offer? If that is what you think, then ya better come a runnin' as fast as you can to take part in this lively session. Learn how to really connect to your customers by selling them more than just "stuff". In this session, you will refine your sales pitch, increase your sales confidence and improve your sales success rate. Come on and flex those sales muscles and get ready for the heavy lifting! *Speaker: Robin Washington*

12:30 – 2:00 PM Exhibits Open and Lunch Break

Lunch sponsored by Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel

2:00 – 3:15 PM Concurrent Sessions

15 Critical Elements to be Successful on the Internet

What do you want your website to accomplish? Are you planning to sell directly to your customers? Will your site build the traffic you need to sell products and services? Susan Sweeney, Internet marketing expert says, "Building a website right from the beginning is like building a house – you have to have the right foundation." In this informative seminar, Susan will help you to recognize your online objectives and will clearly outline the process of developing and building a website that will work from the beginning for you and your web developer. *Speaker: Susan Sweeney*

Measuring Your Advertising Results

Do you blame the publication or online location for an ad that does not perform as well as you thought it should? How should you critically evaluate your message, placement, impressions, responses, etc? Is it the message or the match of audience and outlet? Learn what our Allied partners suggest. What resources do your advertising partners have to help you measure your success? *Panelists: Randall Foskey, Foskey/Phillips Marketing & Advertising; Art Webb, BCF Advertising; Karen Nasuti, Nasuti + Hinkle Creative Thinking; Mary Lewis, eBrains; Ellen Gerhard, The Washington Post Media; Jeanne R. Spence, Budget Travel Magazine*

Setting Sales and Sales Management Objectives to Reach Peak Performance

Peak performance requires setting goals and then creating plans to achieve those goals. We have all heard that and may have even sung that tune to others throughout our career. Let's make that really happen! This session will provide you with tools to carry out your plans and make sales the focal point of your day regardless of how many meetings you have to attend, reports you need to generate and unanswered emails in your inbox that tend to interfere with selling. You'll learn some quick tricks to keep your sales workout on track! *Speaker: Robin Washington*

3:15 – 3:45 PM Exhibits Open and Refreshment Break

3:45 – 5:00 PM Concurrent Sessions

Website Reviews (Interactive Session)

How does your website measure up? What is working for you and what isn't? Susan Sweeney, Internet marketing expert and author will conduct an interactive session where participants may volunteer to have their website reviewed. This session will include brief critiques of your site and will give you invaluable information and instant feedback from an expert in the area of Internet marketing. You'll want to sign up early to reserve your space with Susan. *Speaker: Susan Sweeney*

Best Practices for Tracking and Evaluating Sales Activities from Contacts to Leads to Confirmed Bookings

This shirtsleeves session will explore best practices beginning with the DMAI recommended performance standards while bringing them to the scale of the audience participants. *Facilitators: Mark Shore, Charlottesville/ Albamarle County Convention and Visitors Bureau and Rosa Lee Jude, Wytheville Convention and Visitors Bureau*

Tourism Leadership and Politics

This shirtsleeves session will focus on issues of transparency, accountability, political challenges and other issues facing leaders of bureaus. *Facilitators: Jack Berry, Metro Richmond Convention and Visitors Association; Matt Bolas, Bristol Convention and Visitors Bureau; and Maureen Corum, Nelson County Convention and Visitors Bureau*

5:30 PM Reception and Dinner

This promises to be fun evening with colleagues, an entertaining speaker and an excellent culinary experience.
Sponsored by the Virginia Tourism Corporation

9:00 PM Hospitality Suite

Hosted by Leisure Publishing

Wednesday, April 25th

7:30 – 9:30 AM Registration

8:00 – 9:00 AM Breakfast and General Session with the Virginia Tourism Corporation

Get important updates on VTC marketing programs including electronic marketing to leverage what you've learned during the sessions on Tuesday.

9:15 AM – 12:00 PM Just for VACVB

Tourism as a football, community target and other names used to sell local projects. CVB expert Bill Geist will cover best practices for dealing with community relations, community development and tourism development in today's CVB. *Speaker: Bill Geist, Zeitgeist Consulting*

12:00 PM Hit the Road with "To Go Snacks"

Thank You to Our Sponsors

- Bedford County
- Bedford City
- Bedford Welcome Center
- Good Housekeeping
- Washington Post Media
- eBrains
- Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel
- Virginia Tourism Corporation
- Leisure Publishing
- Loudoun Convention & Visitors Association